



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Moldova

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 11, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We welcome the efforts of the mediators in the Transnistrian conflict during the consultations that took place with the parties on November 8 and 9 in Varna, Bulgaria. The Chairman-in-Office is to be commended for working hard to organize these consultations.

We look forward to the details on the results and outcome of those consultations.

The United States reiterates its support for a peaceful settlement of the conflict that fully respects Moldova's sovereignty and its territorial integrity.

Since July, we have raised the issue of the Transnistrian authorities' attempts to shut down Moldovan-language Latin-script schools. While considerable progress has been made since then, the matter is still – as we have reported several times over the last few weeks - not entirely resolved.

We understand that there have been some small steps in the right direction toward re-opening the Moldovan-language, Latin-script school in Tiraspol. The building that was damaged by Transnistrian militia is being repaired and utilities have been, thankfully, turned on.

While the school in Rybnitsa has been allowed to register, the Registration Chamber has so far refused to release a copy of the registration to the school director, because the registration is said to be only temporary. Without the registration certificate, city authorities are reluctant to permit the provision of utilities to the school.

We also note that the Transnistrian authorities continue to occupy the rail station in Bender, which they seized by force on September 6th.

We call on the Transnistrian authorities again to allow all Moldovan-language Latin-script schools to operate normally, and to cease their illegal occupation of the Bender rail facilities.

If the authorities in Tiraspol wish to show the international community and the rest of Moldova that they are sincere about resolving the conflict, reversing these completely unacceptable actions would be a good place to start.

We also hope that cooperative and transparent progress will resume, prior to the Sofia Ministerial, on the withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldova. Resumption of the withdrawal would send an important and positive signal to the parties most directly concerned, and to all members of the OSCE.

The United States also calls on the Russian Federation to consider and act positively on the proposed Stability and Security Declaration for Moldova, so that it can be signed by the relevant parties at the OSCE Ministerial in Sofia next month.

Thank you.